

## IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) Protective structure for vehicles, ~~characterised in that it comprises~~ comprising a substantially linear front cross member (17A) having two lateral ends comprising a unitary fillable internal chamber, wherein said front cross member is connected to lateral side members (22), and having at least one underlying laterally-placed first absorber element positioned near each lateral end of said front cross member (17A), said laterally-placed first absorber element (16) being connected externally after the cross member (17A) on the bumper side of the vehicle, and having an additional absorber system (25) interposed between said laterally-placed first absorber elements (16), wherein inside said cross member (17A), at least one second absorber element (25) is present, which increases the force which will cause the collapse of the cross member and the energy absorbed by said cross member and, simultaneously, limits the overall dimensions of the entire structure, wherein said underlying laterally-placed first absorber element (16) and said second absorber element (25) are made of materials which deform under pressures of about 5-30 N/mm<sup>2</sup> which correspond to a crushing of 50%.

2. (cancelled).

3. (Currently amended) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said cross member (17A) has a substantially straight geometrical structure which is fitted with curved bumper (26) conforming in shape to said underlying laterally-placed first absorber elements (16) and said additional absorber system wherein said absorber elements and said additional absorber system are interposed between said bumper and said cross member.

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Currently Amended) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim [2] 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said first absorber element (16) and said second absorber element (25) comprise absorbing materials selected from the group consisting of extruded thermoplastic honeycomb, honeycomb made of aluminium, polyurethane foam, foamed polypropylene, rigid polyurethane, semi-rigid polyurethane and extruded polyurethane.

6. (Currently amended) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said cross

member (17A) is made of metal or a plastic flat, produced from an extruded linear profile.

7. (Currently amended) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said cross member (17A) is flat and is made of metal or a plastic flat ~~and is flat~~, produced by molding and welding.

8. (Previously added) Protective structure for vehicles, ~~characterized in that it~~ compris[es]ing a shaped front cross member (17A) made of metal or plastic having two lateral ends comprising a unitary fillable internal chamber, wherein said front cross member is connected to lateral side members (22), and having at least one underlying laterally-placed first absorber element positioned near the lateral end of said front cross member (17A), said laterally-placed first absorber[s] elements connected externally after the cross member (17A) on the bumper side of the vehicle, and an additional absorber system interposed between said laterally-placed absorber elements, wherein inside said cross member (17A), at least one second absorber element (25) is present, which increases the force which will cause the collapse of the cross member and the energy absorbed by said cross member and, simultaneously, limits the overall

dimensions of the entire structure, wherein said underlying laterally-placed first absorber element (16) and said second absorber element (25) are made of materials which deform under pressures of about 5-30 N/mm<sup>2</sup> which correspond to a crushing of 50%.

9. (Previously added) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim 8 characterized in that said cross member is produced from an extruded linear profile.

10. (Previously added) Protective structure for vehicles as in claim 8 characterized in that said cross member is produced by molding and welding.